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September 9, 1985

Dr. Harold E. Varmus
Department of Microbiology
University of California
Room 8SE-405
San Francisco, CA 94143

Dear Harold:

1983!

I learned about the discussions between you and Bob at Bar Harbor. I'm sure he was referring to the attached documents in a portion of his tirade. Please inspect carefully what is in the Karpas collage (which was widely distributed as suggested in his letter to Luc Montaigner) in comparison to the actual letter which was forwarded. This has caused Bob a great deal of anguish which few could blame him for; not to mention the ripple effect it created in the scientific community. As you can see, he uses HTLV generically in the lower part of the letter where he describes 10 isolates by September of 1982. These were, in fact, RT positive transmissions of viruses with undefined characteristics. He was strongly advised not to publish the information until he knew what they were and how they related to one another. That conclusion was only reached in early 1984 and published in the Science series in May.

I'm communicating this to you for two reasons. The first is that it is important for you to see some of the problems that are buried in the issue. The second is that I want to use it as an opportunity to suggest again to you that a better name for the virus than HTLV-III or HTLV-III/LAV or LAV/HTLV-III (as Montaigner may prefer it) does not exist based on our present knowledge. Given the extensive use of these forms already in the literature, it may be wise to leave things as they are (ie. defer the issue) until more compelling reasons emerge to change it.

You must forgive me for butting in again but I hope my suggestions are indeed helpful to your mission.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



Dani P. Bolognesi

DPB/ke

Enclosures